



Office of the Mayor

NEWS RELEASE

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Panel approves option for Blackthorn development

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The South Bend Redevelopment Commission granted a five-year option to the developer of Mishawaka's Edison Lakes Corporate Park to purchase and develop the remaining parcels in the city-owned Blackthorn Corporate Park.

Grubb & Ellis|Cressy & Everett, 3930 Edison Lakes Parkway in Mishawaka, will represent the Commission in the marketing, promotion and sale of property at the site. Blackthorn, consisting of 3,500 acres, is part of the Airport Economic Development Area, the largest in the city.

According to the contract, Cressy & Everett will pay a non-refundable \$100,000 fee (and a credit against future purchases) for the right to buy any of the sites for 75 percent of the present list price. If Cressy exercises its option to buy 25 percent of the available acreage during the five-year period, it may choose to extend its initial option for another five years. The Redevelopment Commission would have the right to deny a five-year extension of the agreement for any period in which Cressy does not buy 25 percent of the available acreage.

"The city's primary work at Blackthorn has been completed. Our part is to provide the infrastructure and the land for developers. It is a private-sector role to market the property," said Mayor Stephen J. Luecke. "Working with Cressy, we believe will give us another way to bring new development and new jobs to South Bend."

Grubb & Ellis|Cressy & Everett was involved in the development of University Park Mall, the Edison Lakes Corporate Park on 700 acres east of Grape Road and more than \$30 million dollars of development in South Bend, including Erskine Plaza, Carbonmill Plaza and West Cleveland Industrial Park.

Blackthorn and Edison Lakes have about the same level of development even though work Edison Lakes was begun a year earlier. Development at Blackthorn has exceeded the half-billion-dollar mark, but significant property still remains.

“We believe South Bend/Mishawaka represent a single market,” said Richard J. Doolittle, chief operating officer of Grubb & Ellis|Cressy & Everett. He noted that at least 70 percent of the firm’s business is in South Bend, and particularly was interested in promoting Blackthorn. “This is a regional, maybe even a national draw,” he said.

As part of the agreement, Grubb & Ellis|Cressy & Everett will create marketing strategies, a website, appropriate signage, a video and printed materials to promote sales at the site.

Established in 1990 on the city’s far northwest side, Blackthorn provides an environment for new industrial, warehouse and business development. The area includes immediate access to the South Bend Regional Airport, the Indiana Toll Road and the U.S. 31 Bypass. Blackthorn is the center of industrial employment in St. Joseph County.